University

magazine

March 2003

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Good eats in Long Beach

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Metro Art

Your guide to Long Beach...

Editor's letter

I lived in the same town for the first 18 years of my life, and I knew it like the back of my hand. I knew every grocery store, video store, park, school and neighborhood. I could drive through the town with my eyes closed, but when my eyes were open I saw the places where I learned to ride a bike, learned how to drive, went on my first date and had my first sleepover. I worked in the restaurant that my grandparents owned, and I knew almost all the customers. When I went out to dinner with my family or to the movies with my friends, I saw people I had known for as long as I could remember.

For some of us, Long Beach is that town. For the majority of us, however, it isn't. Long Beach is a place where we go to school and work, but not really where we live. We commute from other cities, we visit our families and friends on the weekends, and we live in dorms and apartments just until we graduate and find something permanent. The unfortunate thing is that we are missing out on something great.

The city of Long Beach is a rich and diverse place with a strong sense of history and community. In this one city, you can try food from almost anywhere, from Chicago to Japan. You can see a concert or a play, go to the beach or visit an art museum. In 15 minutes, you can drive from the tranquil ocean to frantic downtown to the quiet suburbs.

Long Beach is constantly changing, being rejuvenated and renovated. No magazine, book or brochure, no matter how extensive, could begin to capture the essence of such a complicated city. That said, we hope this issue offers at least a taste of the place that we all call home for a few hours a day. Try one of the unique restaurants reviewed in this issue, check out the innovative art found at Long Beach's Metro Rail stations or see what's been rebuilt and remodeled downtown. Have fun!

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Editor in chief

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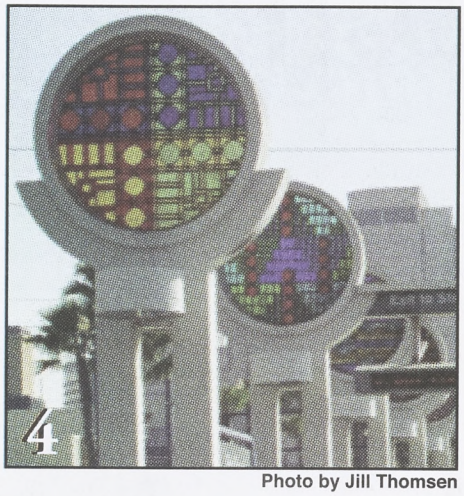

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Photo by Christine G. Adamo

Photo by Heather Clarke

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- **Special music issue** - Read about your favorite bands and venues; plus CD reviews and more.
- Check out **University Magazine** online (updated bi-monthly) at: **www.csulb.edu/~univmag/**

EVERY STATION TELLS A STORY

Story and Photos by Jill Thomsen

Sean Availar is looking at a piece of artwork. He squints his eyes, peering at a sparkling glass mosaic. Availar steps forward and tilts his head in a familiar gallery pose. "It's nice," he says. "I like it."

Suddenly the deep short blasts of a Metro Rail train horn break the silence. A Blue Line train squeals into the station. Availar bustles onto the train, which will take him to work in downtown Los Angeles. The train departs quickly.

The artwork remains behind.

Covering three lines and 52 stations, Metro Rail's art program is unique and world known. Each station is a unique collaboration between architect and artist and is representative of the surrounding neighborhood.

"The point of public art is to create an environment that says 'this is not like every other street in every other town,'" says Cal State Long Beach art professor Craig Stone. "The great thing about the Metro stations is that each one is so different."

The permanent MetroArt collection is a result of a Metropolitan Transit

Authority policy that allocates 0.5 percent of rail construction costs to the enhancement of the rail system through the arts.

The Blue Line, which runs from the heart of Pine Street in downtown Long Beach to Seventh Street in downtown Los Angeles, was constructed in the late 1980s. As the oldest line in the Metro Rail system, the Blue Line stations were built before the inception of the MetroArt program in 1989. Hollow steel lollipops—officially called pylons—were built at each platform in the anticipation of eventually placing circular artwork in them.

The underground stations of the Red and Green lines are different creatures altogether. Each is a fully integrated piece of design and artwork, with architects and artists collaborating from the construction phase of the station. Art for the Blue Line, however, had to come solely from the mind of the artist.

"The station was my first piece of public art," says Anaheim Station artist Terry Braunstein. "My work had a lot of circular imagery already so I stayed with the same kind of theme and moved into a new domain."

Braunstein's piece, titled "Local Odysseys," is a series of 14 photomontages that have been fabricated into porcelain enamel panels. The montages feature "local heroes" from the neighborhoods that surround the station. In previous collages, 90 percent of Braunstein's images were previously existing, or "found," images. This time Braunstein decided to create some of the images herself.

"It seemed wonderfully logical that I would use people from the community for this project," she says. "The piece is about journeys and that particular spot in Long Beach is a cross-section of many different cultures. That is the station that looks like Long Beach; it is where there is a lot of the culture of the city."

Each individual community surrounding the Metro stops had a say in the program from the beginning.

A community advisory committee of nine to 15 people was formed for each Blue Line station. The group worked together to come up with a community profile noting the past, present and future of each area. "The job of an artist is to 'read' a site and pull out the history, understand the history and its value," Stone said.

MetroArt then sent a request for proposal out into the art community. Each submission by an artist was required to be site specific. "Long Beach is one of the most diverse cities in the county. You couldn't move a project to the other end of town, it wouldn't make sense," said MTA public arts official Alan Nakagawa.

MTA received about 100 to 200 applicants for each station. After a panel selected the artist and they were rewarded with a contract, the final design went back to the local community advisory committee for approval.

The piece at First Street Station is indicative of this customized approach.

Titled "Breezy and Delightful," the work is a series of colorful and kinetic wind-driven sculptures. Patterned after cultural textile designs of the area, each pylon allows the air blowing in from the sea to animate the design. Depending on the time of day, sunlight shines through the cutout patterns and leaves various geometric shadows on the train platform.

The artist, Paul Tzanetopoulos, says the title for the piece came from early publicity for the city of Long Beach.

"I thought this phrase reflected both the city and the site of the station," he says. "On each of my frequent visits to the station it has been a beautiful, breezy and pleasant day."

Highlighted here are three segments of Terry Braunstein's piece "Local Odysseys."

Stone notes that although people might not realize that the art uses a textile pattern, but they recognize the pattern when they see it.

"Public art fulfills a basic need for things to be different in a structure that wants things to stay the same," Stone says.

Stone feels that the main goal of public art is to create a sense of place.

"Urban planners and sociologists have discovered that to have pride in a neighborhood, people must have a sense of ownership," he says. "The area must be different than other areas."

The quest to discover new areas draws people to Metro Rail and its artwork. Thirty volunteer docents give tours of the Rail's artwork to various groups, including high schools, temples and Girl Scout troops. The docent council averages 15 to 20 tours a month.

"People are very excited about the tours," says Barbara Lashenick, the current MTA docent counsel coordinator. "Not only do they learn about the art, but they also learn about the different neighborhoods and the process of how to use the system, how to get to places they would go—things as simple as how to buy a ticket."

Lashenick noted that Blue Line tours are less common than others because the line is so far out and the art is not as extensive. The Blue Line, however, averages about 70,000 passengers weekly, including Sean Availar, who was admiring June Edmond's vibrant mosaic "We Know Who We Are" located at Pacific Station.

In a painstaking process that took over a year, twelve Venetian glass mosaics were created from Edmond's sketches of the local people from the neighborhood around the station. The six north-facing panels are modern scenes in the life of the community, while the six south-facing panels are distinct icons that present cultural histories of the area.

The colorful result was Edmond's first piece in the glass mosaic medium. The glass was imported from Italy and placed on the design one piece at a time. A random gunshot once hit the piece, forcing Edmond to go back and repair the glass. In fact, the MTA has three main requirements for the artwork at each outdoor station. It must be site specific, made of materials that can withstand weather, and be vandal-proof. Well, as vandal-proof as possible.

Stone, who designed the parking meter shadows which playfully line the sidewalks of Belmont Shore, says that public art gives an artist a great opportunity to interact with people on a daily basis.

"Public art is trying to make places public, make people more likely to interact with each other, to feel safe, to sleep, dance and jump around," he says.

That same interaction gave Anaheim Station artist Braunstein pause as she reached the final stages of her project.

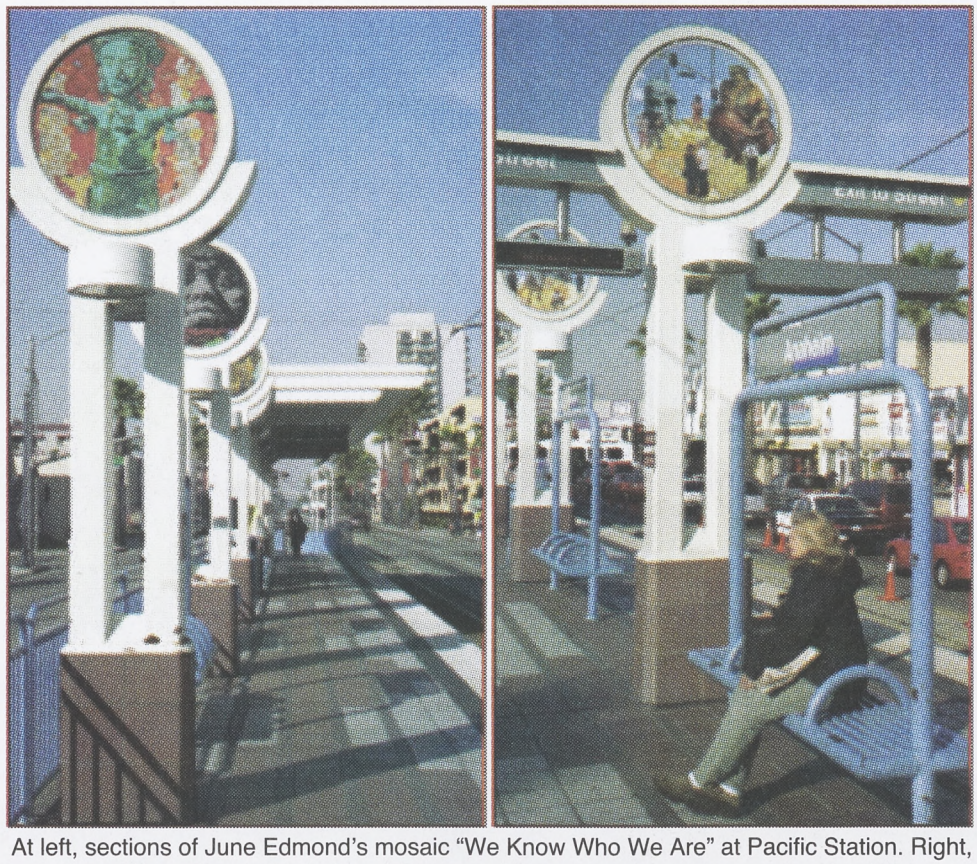
"Just before I sent the collages off to the porcelain place I had a dawning realization that it was going to endure," Braunstein says. "Everything I had done before I could just put in a closet if I didn't like it. This was different. It was difficult to send off—I was making a final decision on something that was going to be there 10 years from now."

Although Gov. Gray Davis has recently proposed a 50 percent cut in appropriations for the California Arts Council, which funds many public arts projects, Braunstein feels confident in Long Beach's commitment to the arts.

"Parks and Marine and Public Works have been very good about including artists on design teams when they start out," she says. "If they're going to build benches or put in a sidewalk, for a small amount more you can sandblast the concrete or add tiles to the benches. It's going to happen anyway and it's great they're including artists."

The budget crisis will not effect the permanent works already in place at Metro stations across the county, however. Strong community support has resulted in municipal and corporate contributions of over $1.5 million. The art is in place to engage transit riders and to let them know which station they are at.

"It's very L.A.," Stone says. "Each one is unique and celebrates the individualism of the architect, artists and community—it's not a franchise." UM



At left, sections of June Edmond's mosaic "We Know Who We Are" at Pacific Station. Right, a portion of Terry Braunstein's "Local Odysseys" featuring community members and historical figures.

Mayor makes waves

By Julie Guevara
Illustration by Jeremy Benns

Just 18 miles from Long Beach, there is a large city that has been through the mucky waters associated with dirty politics. On Jan. 26, 2003, the residents of South Gate were given the opportunity to reevaluate their council members and treasurer. They were to decide once and for all if they wanted keep certain members in office. City Treasurer Albert Robles, Mayor Xochilt Ruvalcaba, Vice Mayor Raul Moriel, and councilwoman Maria Benavides were the members whose fate was decided.

An 8-1 majority ousted these four elected officials on allegations of using taxpayer funds to pay for criminal defense, stripping City Clerk Carmen Avalos of her duties, and being outright corrupt, among others.

As if these allegations weren't enough, on the night of Feb. 3, Mayor Ruvalcaba embedded an indelible image in the minds of many. At the end of a meeting held that night, Ruvalcaba hit councilman Henry Gonzalez across the head. The incident, caught on tape, came after Ruvalcaba claimed Gonzalez lunged at her and groped her breast. She said that he intentionally turned his chair so that his initial attack could not be seen. The papers only reported that Ruvalcaba was

charged with a misdemeanor, but failed to report the serious charges against Gonzalez, according to Ruvalcaba.

"If you fall, you get back up, dust yourself off and keep on going," Ruvalcaba says with a big smile. The allegations and the ousting have not affected her good spirits.

"Part of it was my mistake because I never came out and answered to these allegations," Ruvalcaba admits. "I was too busy doing what I thought was right."

Ruvalcaba says she hoped that the residents would see all the positive things she had done for them by building skate parks, cleaning up graffiti and setting up programs.

"I thought to myself, 'I will not grace them [the media] with an answer because it's just not right,'" she says. "At the end of the day, the voters will see what a great job I am doing."

It was not enough for the residents. The black cloud of allegations still loomed. The council members wore the word "corruption" like a scarlet letter.

"I gave my heart and soul for the community," Ruvalcaba says. When Sunlaw Energy Partners proposed a project called Nueva Azalea, which would have put a 550-megawatt power plant in South Gate, one of the few members to oppose it was Ruvalcaba. Ruvalcaba admits that Sunlaw offered her a trip to Brazil to see one of the plants. She then turned around and asked Sunlaw what price they would put on the lives of their own family members.

"In essence, that's what they were asking me to do," she says. "They were asking me to look the other way."

Other members were recieving gracious "donations" into their accounts and being asked to turn the other cheek at the harmful effects of the plant, Ruvalcaba says. Sen. Martha Escutia, whose husband works for Sunlaw, was endorsing the project. The city voted against the plant, the donations stopped and put more officials on Escutia's. At that point, Ruvalcaba wanted nothing to do with any of those who were in favor of the power plant.

"I was disgusted with her [Martha Escutia]," Ruvalcaba says. "She was elected to protect us and what does she do? She sells us to the highest bidder."

It was Escutia who called for the investigation of Ruvalcaba and her council when the plant proposal was voted against.

When the city clerk was stripped of her duties, it made the council appear as if something was being hidden under their sleeves. According to Ruvalcaba, Carmen Avalos was a year and a half behind on tracking the minutes of the meetings. She was working full time as a teacher and not investing the time that she was being paid a large sum of money for.

Regarding the allegations of using taxpayer funds to defend the council, Ruvalcaba says the money was being used to defend themselves against the allegations, which is legal. The ousted mayor suggested that the people who opposed her and the council were merely upset over the fact that the plant was voted against. At the same time, former Mayor Bill Dewitt was harboring animosity toward them because he was initially ousted for being in favor of the plant.

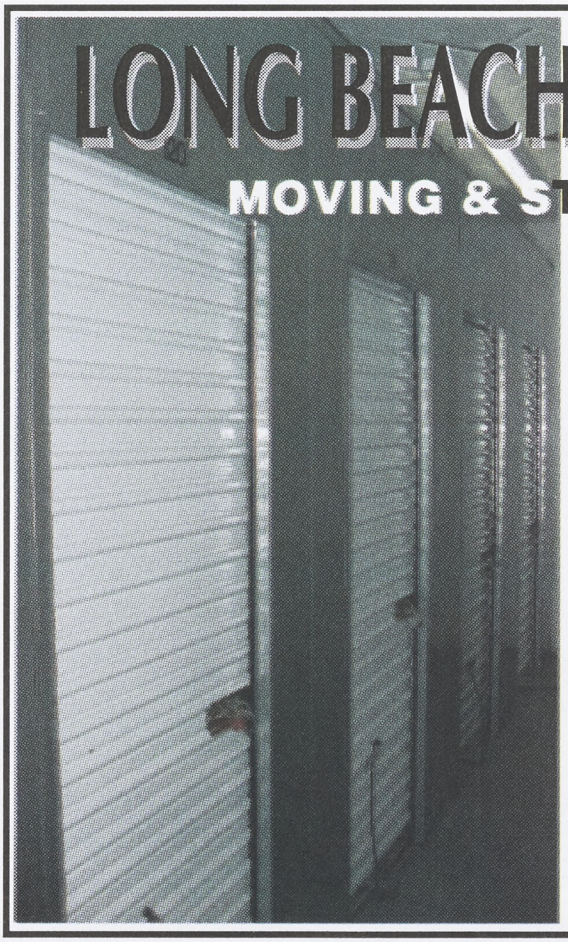
> "You have an election. You win or lose an election. It's over. You don't feel bad about it—you get over it."
>
> –Mayor Xochilt Ruvalcaba

"The corruption does not exist," Ruvalcaba says. "These people are being motivated by hate and anger."

The first council meeting with the new members who replaced Ruvalcaba, Robles, Moriel and Benavides was viewed as a sigh of relief for the community. It will be a tough fight for Ruvalcaba's re-election on March 4, 2003, when voters will again be asked if they want her in office.

"You have an election," Ruvalcaba says. "You win or lose an election. It's over. You don't feel bad about it—you get over it."

Will the residents of South Gate be telling Ruvalcaba to "get over it"? UM



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Carpenter Center
3/4: ATAFY's: Tom Sawyer
3/7: Mummenschanz
3/8: George Shearing
3/9: CSULB Music: Celebrating Music
3/13-15: High School Dance Festival
3/16: Forever Plaid
3/21: Legend's in Motion
3/22: Snow Queen
3/28: Grupo Corpo
3/29-30: Encore Performing Arts

Dance department
3/7: Mummenschanz
3/20-23: Contemporary Concert
3/28: Grupo Corpo

Film & electronic arts department:
2/21-3/15: Cal Rep presents "Leatherface" @ LB Edison Theater
2/2/-3/22: Player's Theater presents "Laramie Project"

Venues

Chain Reaction:
1652 W. Lincoln Ave., Anaheim, (714) 635-6067, www.allages.com

Coach House:
Capistrano: 33157 Camino Capistrano Road, San Juan Capistrano, (949) 496-8930, www.thecoachhouse.com

El Rey Theatre:
5515 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, (323) 936-6400

Galaxy Theatre:
3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600, www.galaxytheatre.com

Glass House:
200 W. Second St., Pomona, (714) 647-7704, www.goldenvoice.com

Great Western Forum:
3900 W. Manchester Blvd., Inglewood (310) 330-7300

The Grove of Anaheim:
2200 E. Katella Ave., Anaheim, (714) 712-2700, www.thegroveofanaheim.com

Hollywood Palladium:
6215 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood, (323) 962-7600, www.hollywoodpalladium.com

House of Blues:
Anaheim: S. Disneyland Drive, Anaheim, (714) 778-2583, www.hob.com
Sunset: 8430 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood, (323) 845-5100, www.hob.com

Key Club:
9039 Sunset Blvd., W. Hollywood, (310) 274-5800, www.keyclub.com

Kodak Theatre:
6801 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood, (323) 308-6363, www.kodaktheatre.com. Long Beach Arena

Long Beach Terrace Theatre:
300 E. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach, (562) 436-3661 www.ocpac.com

Mr. B's Restaurant and Sports Lounge:
11272 Los Alamitos Blvd, Los Alamitos, (562) 430-0213

Roxy Theatre:
9009 Sunset Blvd., W. Hollywood, (310) 276-2222, www.theroxytheater.com

Shrine Auditorium:
665 W. Jefferson Blvd., Los Angeles, (213) 749-5123

Troubadour:
9081 Santa Monica Blvd., W. Hollywood, (310) 276-1158, www.troubadour.com

Universal Amphitheatre:
100 Universal City Plaza, Universal City, (818) 777-3931

The Wiltern:
3790 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, (213) 380-5005.

Whisky:
8901 Sunset Blvd., W. Hollywood, (310) 652-4202.

Designed and compiled by Mitchell Byrd

Off-Campus

Tue, 03/04/03
Near Miss (Ex-Big Wig) @ Chain Reaction
Henry Rollins @ Galaxy Theatre
Neville Brothers @ HOB Sunset Strip
Wed, 03/05/03
Even In Blackouts @ Chain Reaction
Special Goodness @ Troubadour
Phunk Junkeez @ Galaxy Theatre
Kinky @ HOB Sunset Strip
Thu, 03/06/03
Nick Carter @ HOB Sunset Strip
Bredrin Daddys - Elliot Nes @ Galaxy Theatre
Gene Loves Jezebel @ Coach House/Capistrano
Jesse Malin @ Troubadour
Kinky @ HOB Anaheim
Atom and His Package @ Chain Reaction
DJ Baba G @ Key Club
Kottonmouth Kings @ Roxy Theatre
Long Beach Shortbus @ Galaxy Theatre
Belinda Carlisle @ HOB Sunset Strip
Neville Brothers @ HOB Anaheim
Sat, 03/08/03
Fire Theft @ Glass House
Nada Surf @ Chain Reaction
Ted Leo and the Pharmacists @ Troubadour
Kottonmouth Kings @ Roxy Theatre
Ludacris @ The Grove of Anaheim
Michael Tomlinson @ Coach House/Capistrano
Nick Carter @ HOB Anaheim
Bodycount @ Key Club
Sun, 03/09/03
Kelly Osbourne @ Glass House
Pretty Girls Make Graves @ Chain Reaction
Death Cab for Cutie @ Troubadour
Wild Child @ Whisky
Ludacris @ HOB Sunset Strip
Mon, 03/10/03
Chris Robinson @ Troubadour
Tue, 03/11/03
Pushed @ Whisky
Belinda Carlisle @ HOB Anaheim
Q & Not U - Engine Down @ Troubadour
Brad Paisley @ HOB Sunset Strip
Wed, 03/12/03
Chris Robinson @ Troubadour
Keller Williams @ Galaxy Theatre
Thu, 03/13/03
Never Heard of It @ Chain Reaction
Boogie Knights @ HOB Anaheim
Keller Williams @ El Rey Theatre
Mikey Dread @ Coach House/Capistrano
Fri, 03/14/03
Facedown Records Festival @ Glass House
Name Taken CD Release @ Chain Reaction
American Hi-Fi @ Troubadour
Lynch Mob featuring George Lynch of Dokken @ Galaxy Theatre
Fri, 03/14/03
Robben Ford @ Coach House/Capistrano
Young Dubliners @ HOB Anaheim
Sat, 03/15/03
American Hi-Fi @ Chain Reaction
Hollow @ Key Club
The American Wake @ Galaxy Theatre
DADA @ Coach House/Capistrano
Paul Rodriguez with Mike Robles @ Universal Amphitheatre
Los Lobos @ HOB Anaheim
Phix @ HOB Sunset Strip
Sun, 03/16/03
Jaheim @ The Wiltern
Scene Creamers @ Troubadour
Mon, 03/17/03
Audioslave @ Hollywood Palladium
The Scene Creamers @ Chain Reaction
The Fenians @ HOB Anaheim
Young Dubliners @ HOB Sunset Strip
Tue, 03/18/03
Common @ HOB Sunset Strip
RX Bandits-Food Not Bombs @ Chain Reaction
Les Nubians @ El Rey Theatre
Slightly Stoopid @ HOB Anaheim
D4 W/ Electric 6 @ Troubadour
Wed, 03/19/03
Big Bad Voodoo Daddy @ Ventura Theatre
Common @ HOB Sunset Strip
RX Bandits-Food Not Bombs @ Chain Reaction
Moon Raker W/ Maya Marin @ Galaxy Theatre
Pretty Girls Make Graves @ Troubadour
Sahara Hotnights @ Roxy Theatre
Living Legends @ HOB Anaheim
Thu, 03/20/03
Living Legends @ HOB Sunset Strip
Great Big Sea @ Coach House/Capistrano
Marty Stuart W/Boomer McLennon @ Galaxy Theatre
Neil Innes @ Vynyl
Sahara Hotnights @ Roxy Theatre
Shadows Fall @ Whisky
Chicago @ The Grove of Anaheim
Thu, 03/20/03 (cont.)
Common @ HOB Anaheim
Fri, 03/21/03
Dead Kennedys @ Galaxy Theatre
Great Big Sea @ Roxy Theatre
Joe Jackson @ El Rey Theatre
Joan Sebastan @ Universal Amphitheatre
Super Diamond @ HOB Anaheim
Sat, 03/22/03
A R Rehman @ Great Western Forum
Code Name Rocky @ Chain Reaction
Joe Jackson Band @ El Rey Theatre
Long Beach Symphony Pops:Latin Fiesta @ Long Beach Arena
The Spirit of Dance @ Hollywood Palladium
Wild Child - a Jim Morrison Tribute @ Coach House/Capistrano
Super Diamond @ HOB Anaheim
Sun, 03/23/03
John Doe - Peter Case @ Coach House/Capistrano
Key To Arson - Singe @ Galaxy Theatre
Mon, 03/24/03
Lyricist Lounge @ HOB Sunset Strip
Tue, 03/25/03
Curl Up and Die @ Chain Reaction
The Coral @ Troubadour
Thu, 03/27/03
Mock Orange – Brightlife @ Chain Reaction
The Selecter - the Toasters @ Galaxy Theatre
Willie Porter - Kelly Joe Phelps @ Coach House/Capistrano
Fri, 03/28/03
Jagermeister Music Tour @ The Wiltern
Monique Powell @ HOB Anaheim
Dread Zeppelin @ Coach House/Capistrano
Lizzy Borden @ Galaxy Theatre
Switchfoot @ Roxy Theatre
Jaguares @ Universal Amphitheatre
Selecter - the Toasters @ Key Club
Sat, 03/29/03
Orange County Music Awards @ The Grove of Anaheim
Dave Wakeling @ Coach House/Capistrano
King Crimson @ The Wiltern
Sun, 03/30/03
Cheryl Wheeler @ Coach House/Capistrano
Mon, 03/31/03
Shuvel with Insolence @ Whisky

A taste of Long Beach

UM visits some of the hottest restaurants in Long Beach

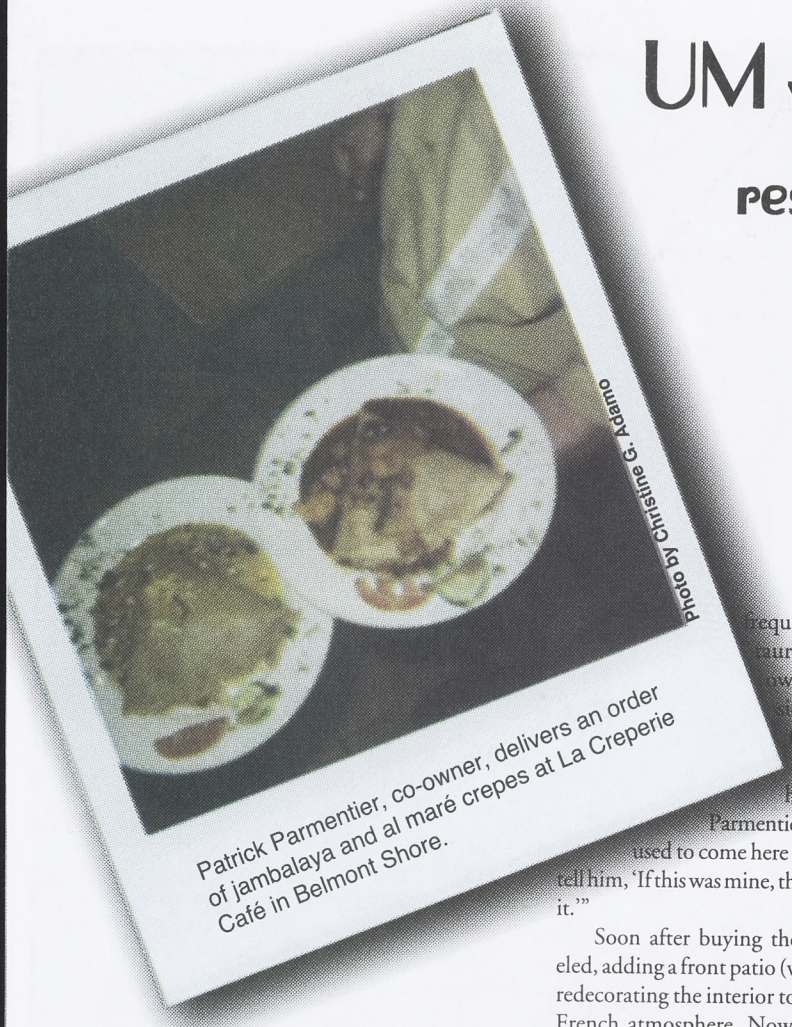


Photo by Christine G. Adamo

Patrick Parmentier, co-owner, delivers an order of jambalaya and al maré crepes at La Creperie Café in Belmont Shore.

La Creperie Café

By Mandy Wright

Eating a crepe is not generally thought of as an extreme sport. But according to Patrick Parmentier, owner and operator of La Creperie Café, the thought of trying one of the delicate French concoctions is frightening to many people.

"People are kind of scared of crepes," Parmentier says. "I want people to come here for dinner, for breakfast. People think that crepes are only sweet. But you can have a meal here."

It's true—when many Americans think of crepes, they envision a sweet, rich dessert. La Creperie on Second Street, however, offers a crepe for any time, occasion or taste. The menu contains a wide variety of *le petit dejeuner* (breakfast crepes), *les crepes sale* (savory crepes) and *les crepes sucree* (sweet crepes), as well as authentic French soups and sandwiches.

Since buying La Creperie in August 2001, Parmentier has made quite a few changes. As a frequent customer of the restaurant under its previous owner, he already had a vision for the small café before he bought it.

"I always wanted to have this place," Parmentier says. "Me and my friend used to come here all the time, and I used to tell him, 'If this was mine, this is what I would do with it.'"

Soon after buying the restaurant, he remodeled, adding a front patio (which is now heated) and redecorating the interior to give it a more authentic French atmosphere. Now, Parmentier is also expanding the menu to include even more French cuisine. Among some of the new items will be lentil and white bean soups, cheese plates, escargot, frittatas, and French press coffee, which is made right at the table. The crepe, however, will remain a staple of the restaurant.

"The crepe will always be there; it will be our main dish," Parmentier says. "But we're going to add more to the menu to bring more customers here."

La Creperie is also making plans to increase its already extensive college student demographic. The restaurant recently obtained a beer and liquor license, and now offers reasonably priced French wine and both imported and domestic beers. Starting in March and continuing through the end of the spring semester, the cafe will have a student night every Tuesday, during which students can present a Cal State Long Beach ID card and receive 20 percent off their meal.

La Creperie caters to its canine customers as well. Parmentier is creating a dog menu for customers from the nearby store Whiskers, which sells all things pet-related. The menu will include small crepes filled with dog food that dogs can enjoy outside of the patio.

La Creperie is a wonderful and different alternative to the usual college student cuisine. Parmentier prides himself on offering a unique experience to Long Beach residents, and feels that those who have never tried a crepe before will be pleasantly surprised by the experience.

"We're unique," he says. "I think you can see we have a unique atmosphere, by the way we look. Nobody does what we do. When we do crepes, it's different than any other crepe place here."

Some of La Creperie's most highly recommended crepes include the spinach feast (scrambled eggs, spinach, tomatoes, mushrooms and ricotta, feta and mozzarella cheese; $7.95), the stallion (scrambled eggs, Italian sausage, cheese, potatoes, caramelized onion and green peppers; $8.25), the French Riviera (chicken, artichoke hearts, cheese, tomatoes and basil cream sauce; $8.95), the al mare (jumbo shrimp, sun-dried tomatoes, shiitake mushrooms, sweet red onions and garlic basil cream sauce; $11.50), the Romeo et Juliette (Nutella, bananas, fresh strawberries; $7.65), and the Martinique (caramelized bananas in brown sugar, rum and vanilla ice cream; $7.95).

La Creperie Café
5110 E. Second St.
(562) 434-8499
www.lacreperiecafe.net

Soup and salad: $4.75 to $7.95
Crepes: $4.95 to $11.50
Beer and wine: $3.25 to $6
Tuesday night is student night

Chicago Jimmy's Pizzeria

By Alisha Gomez

Today's average diner is usually on the go, often consuming food that is neither fresh nor authentic. With big chains popping up all around town and other restaurants offering swanky environments and hard-to-pronounce menus, getting a good meal at the right price isn't always easy.

So when a place like Chicago Jimmy's Pizzeria opens up, it's no wonder people flock to it. Big hearty portions at great prices keep people coming back for more.

With its small, intimate and cozy dining area, Chicago Jimmy's is everything it promises: fresh, authentic Chicago-style food with friendly service. The atmosphere resembles restaurants back East, appealing to people of all ages.

With such tough competition, keeping their promise to customers is just the way owner Amy Vaughn and her staff run business. After taking it over as the third owner, Vaughn is committed to keeping the same theme that original owner Jimmy Eleopoulous opened up with: an authentic Chicago style restaurant. And though Eleopoulous opened with true Chicago family recipes, since he was from Chicago, she has improved some items.

"We've definitely changed the sauce since we bought the place," Vaughn says. "Spiced it up a little more, used more fresh spices and gave it more flavor."

Vaughn says they are in the process of adding a few more items to the menu, like freshly made pesto, innovating other recipes and offering chef's specials on particular nights. She also has enhanced the dessert menu.

Complete with a comfortable atmosphere

Most of the decor has remained the same from the original owner. Black and white pictures of "gangsters" cover each wall, giving it a true Italian feel. A new addition is a large retro-looking mural on the center wall, done by a local artist. Vaughn has also done some rearranging to allow more dine-in capacity, something that she is hoping will grow over time.

"I am trying build up the dine-in clientele so that this can be like a neighborhood kind of hang-out, a casual place," Vaughn says. "Since I've owned it, people come and get a salad and a cup of coffee, and just study for a couple of hours. We love having them because it makes our night fun."

They certainly do have plenty of lcoals. Located next to one of Cal State Long Beach's sorority houses and amidst many homes and apartments, Vaughn says they have regulars who, when they walk through the door, the staff knows exactly want they want before they say it.

"I like the fact that it is small," says Vaughn, who worked in similar tiny joints throughout her college life and prefers them to the corporate world of restaurants. "You have a lot of room to try new things out and there's room for growth, but you're not tied to growth."

Truly Authentic Food

The dough for the pizzas is the original recipe that Eleopoulous made fresh every day and from scratch, unlike other pizza places that often buy their dough frozen. Chicago Jimmy's rolls out the dough and hand-kneads it for each and every customer.

"One good thing about us being the size we are is that we're not too microscopic and we're large enough to accommodate a certain amount of people," says manager Sean Cortez-Bartley. "But because of our size in the back, our prep area, we have to get fresh food every day to every other day."

It's true. The restaurant doesn't have a freezer where things are stored for months. The staff shops every day for the new groceries. A local bakery even bakes their bread daily.

The menu has everything from appetizers to pizzas, pastas, ribs and chicken dishes. Sandwiches have unique names like "The Elliot Ness A Heroes Sub," which is turkey, ham and cheese, or "The Fat Clemenza," a sub filled with homemade meat balls, cheese and Chicago Jimmy's homemade pizza sauce. The restaurant even has "The Diet Rite" pizza, which is a Dr. Atkins recipe. And don't forget the calzones, an item Vaughn says they are known for. Plus, it is one of the few places that delivers beer or wine with food.

Aside from the fact that everything ordered is truly fresh, many of the special desserts Chicago Jimmy's features are directly imported from Italy or bought from a local, family-owned pastry shop.

"The desserts are very authentic and unique," Vaughn says. "They're not something you can get at just any place around here."

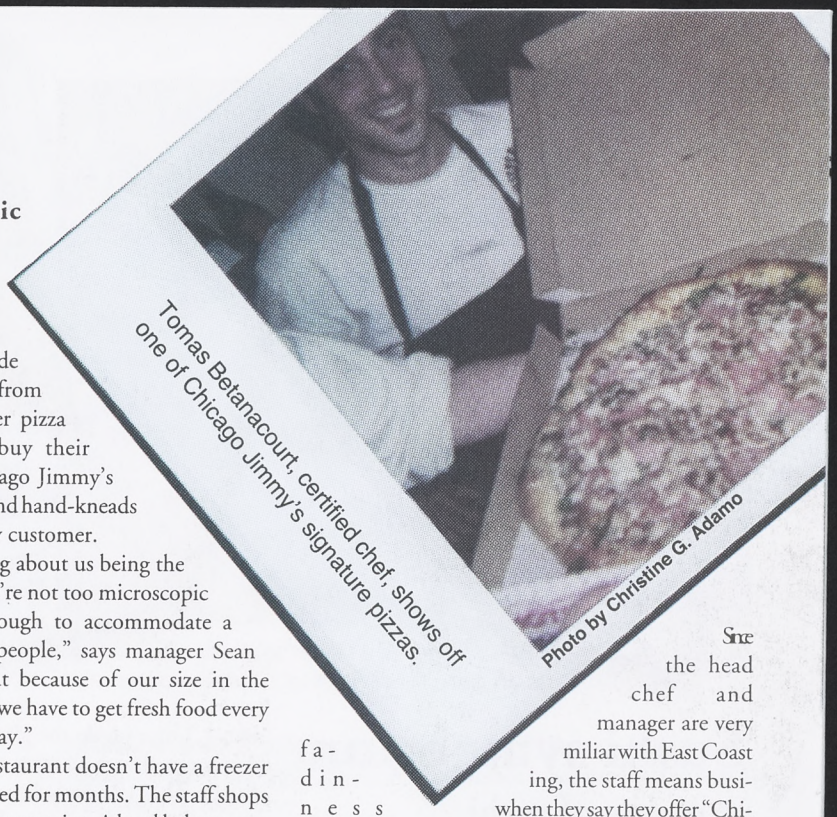
And absolutely delicious they are. A dining guest can't go wrong with any of the choices—tiramisu, chocolate tartufo, New York style cheesecake, chocolate fondant cake, lemon tartufo limon cello and chocolate souffle. However, personally, the chocolate tartufo is too good to be true.

Although all the dishes are excellent, Cortez-Bartley says the sandwiches are very popular among the day crowd, and evening crowds favor the personal pizzas and lasagna.

Still, Vaughn says everybody loves the spaghetti and meatballs because it is "simple, the sauce is good and the meatballs are good too."

As for pizza, the Grecian Special, which has extra cheese, Canadian bacon, onions, green peppers and sausage, keeps customers coming back for more.

Head chef Tomas Betancourt agrees that the Grecian Special is a hotseller. Since he came on board, he says it is the one item he makes the most.



Tomas Betanacourt, certified chef, shows off one of Chicago Jimmy's signature pizzas.

Photo by Christine G. Adamo

Since the head chef and manager are very familiar with East Coast fa-dining, the staff means business when they say they offer "Chicago style food." In fact, Betancourt was a regular customer before he became head chef, and he swears it just doesn't get more authentic than Chicago Jimmy's.

"Without a doubt, it's the only place you can get a real Chicago pizza," he says. "I know my food. It's an authentic Chicago style pizza."

The restaurant has a come a long way from the take-out and delivery place everyone knew under the second owner.

"Just from looking at [past] receipts, it was 70 percent delivery, 20 percent take-out and 10 percent dine-in," Vaughn says. "So 10 percent on a small scale like this might be two dine-in's a day. Since [I took over] it's grown to where on the weekends, sometimes people wait for tables."

And people must be talking, as both Vaughn and Cortez-Bartley agree word of mouth is what is making them known.

"It's the kind of place where if you eat here once, you're definitely a customer for life," Betancourt says. "I should know that, I'm one of them."

Hey, it's like all three say, "If you can't get to Chicago, experience Chicago through Chicago Jimmy's."

Chicago Jimmy's Pizzeria
2945 E. Broadway
(562) 433-3913

Appetizers: $1.95 to $6.99
Pizzas: $3.90 to $16.95
Sandwiches, salads, pasta and calzones: $2.95 to $11
Ribs, BBQ chicken: $8.95 to $12.95
Desserts: $2.95 to $3.95

Shrimp boats sail across the bar at Sushi Saurus in Belmont Shore.

Customers salivate in wait of sustenance at Sushi of Naples.

Sushi symposium

A review of sushi restaurants in Long Beach

Story and photos by Paul DeCarlo

Sushi Saurus

Behind the bar at Sushi Saurus, head chef Toshi Arai is quick with his hands. He works with the confidence of a seasoned samurai, moving with incredible speed and precision as his knife slices the savory meat. Before handing the succulent roll of raw fish and rice to the welcoming customer in front of him, Arai barks an order in Japanese to the only other chef within earshot. The customer nods in appreciation before taking the delicate dish, pausing briefly to steady the chopsticks.

"Excuuuse me!" chimes the assistant chef as he passes by with a full armload of tuna, looking exactly as it did when it was still swimming, except for the missing head. As soon as the glistening tuna hits the cutting block it is literally only three minutes before it is prepped, wrapped and ready for the fillet process to be repeated throughout the day.

There is a cozy, welcoming atmosphere in the narrow restaurant, as scattered lunch customers dine in peace. With room for a dozen tables and a small eat-in bar, Sushi Saurus offers a casual and fun eating atmosphere. Plan on spending anywhere from $10 to $15 per person, and bring a healthy appetite.

Aki Sushi

"Thai, or sushi?" asks the hostess, seeming to understand the puzzled look of a first time customer. Once inside the glass door entrance, diners can choose whether they would rather eat Bai Pu Thai (formerly known as Siamese Thai, name change effective in March 2003) to the right, or instead select the healthy and satisfying sushi cuisine to the left. The building luckily offers room enough for two culturally separate eating experiences under one roof!

Aree Chantravat, an alumnus of Cal State Long Beach, has owned and operated Aki Sushi Bar since March 12, 1977. Quietly boasting some of the lowest sushi prices, Aki is just a short trip west on Seventh Street, if you are coming from CSULB campus, just before Walnut Street on the left side.

After being seated at the sushi bar or a table, depending on preference, customers are almost overcome by the hospitality offered by the staff at Aki. Modest signs handcrafted with markers and construction paper are mounted on the wall behind the bar advertising menu favorites, and a dry-erase board lists daily specials.

It is almost impossible to miss the huge stack of small bamboo boxes piled high on a shelf that runs full-length behind the bar. According to Japanese tradition, it is good luck to drink sake from the bamboo box, also known as mazu. Boxes can be purchased for $4 and customers are encouraged to decorate the box as they see fit. Over the years, a great many of these mazu have sold, Chantravat admits, but occasionally the staff needs help from patrons in picking them out of the massive conglomeration.

"Last week my granddaughter counted 526," Chantravat says, smiling proudly.

With the most affordable sushi menu in Long Beach, patrons can spent around $8 to $10 and feel completely satisfied. After an order of soybeans and hot sake, try an Aki roll or maybe go for traditional uncooked salmon or yellowtail on a bed of rice, if you're so inclined.

Sushi of Naples

Sushi of Naples offers a wonderful, wide array of fish with absolutely no substitute for freshness. New orders of baby yellowtail, mackerel and eel are received daily from Japan, contributing to a reputation of only the highest quality. Besides being rich in protein and minerals like calcium, phosphorous and iron, these fish are also incredibly tasty.

For the last 14 years, the establishment has succeeded in creating a great ambiance for lunch- and dinner-goers. With huge windows and decorative Japanese banners, murals and artwork, Sushi of Naples is every bit as appealing to the eye as it is to the palate. The expansive L-shaped bar seats about 25 hungry clientele and the plentiful surrounding seating areas offer a beautiful sense of tranquility.

Warm smiles and gracious accommodation from the staff, including manager Angel Chi, give customers nothing but good things to rave about. Chi calls the changing menu and high quality of fish some of the main reasons for Sushi of Naples' longevity.

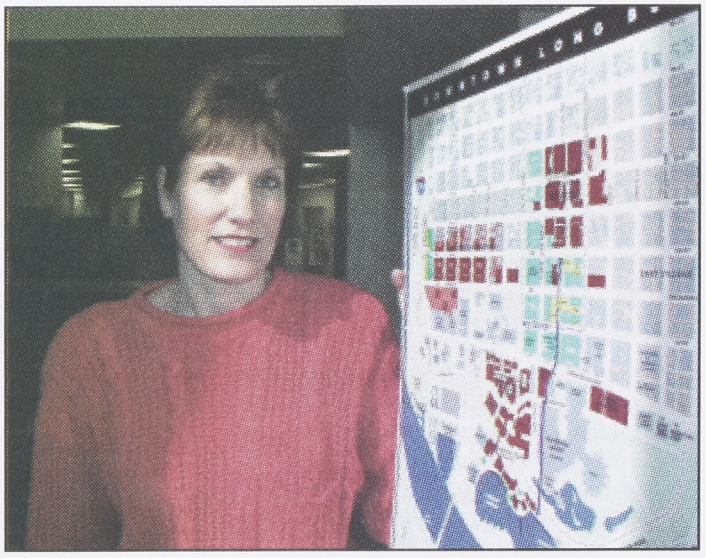
New items like the albacore dream or the Naples roll, along with longtime favorites such as the crunchy tiger and Pasadena rolls, keep the customers coming back for more. Come with an empty stomach and a big grin, but bring along $15 to $20 for each person in your party. UM

Aki Sushi Bar
1626 E. Seventh St.
(562) 436-8180

Sushi of Naples
5470 E. Second St.
(562) 434-1122

Sushi Saurus
5260 E. Second St.
(562) 439-1950

Downtown goes *upscale*



Community development specialist Barbi Clark shows off redevelopment plans for Downtown Long Beach.

Story and photo by Heather Clarke

Long Beach has often been described as the little city that could. In 1921, people were drawn to the city due to the discovery of oil. A population boom pumped in money to the area as oil was pumped out. Now the downtown area is a major draw for Long Beach, generating interest from businesses and the entertainment-seeking public. Downtown continues to grow as an attraction while the city works on polishing its reputation.

The face of Downtown Long Beach is ever changing due to the united efforts of the Long Beach Redevelopment Agency and help from the Downtown Long Beach Business Associates, said DLBA member Jeff King.

There are 15 planned additions to Downtown, which will consist of entertainment, housing and retail, said Barbi Clark, community development specialist for the Long Beach Revelopment Agency.

"We want to turn it into a place to live, work and have fun," said Clark, whose main focus is Downtown.

The agency's vision for Downtown is to keep it a bustling area with ongoing movement and action, Clark said. The agency will make sure this vision is accomplished and maintained by requiring new development plans to have ground floor commercial use and upper unit housing. The projects will collectively create 3,000 new living spaces, Clark said.

One project area that students may recognize from visiting the Blue Cafe is located off of Broadway and the Promenade. The project will follow the agency's guidelines for upper living units and ground level commercial and entertainment use. Thirty-nine artists' lofts and seven penthouses will make up the living space.

The Pike at Rainbow Harbor is another project in Downtown, and will include entertainment, retail and restaurants. The project's estimated cost is $130 million, and it is expected to be completed in September 2003. The Queen Mary will also undergo renovation of its rooms and add a new development adjacent from the ship. The development project alone will cost $100 million and is expected to be completed within 2003.

Despite the new development, Downtown will still keep its characteristic feel. The Cultural Heritage Commission asked that the D'Orsay Hotel project keep the historic facade of the American Hotel, which was built around 1906. The new hotel will include a ground floor with restaurants and a health spa.

The Long Beach Redevelopment Agency has undertaken improvement projects to upgrade dilapidated areas of Long Beach since the 1960s, said Barbara Kaiser, bureau manager of redevelopment.

The Downtown makeover is a collaborative effort, but the Downtown Long Beach Business Associates plays an important role in working with the city on these improvements. Downtown Long Beach has evolved into a different landscape, said Kraig Kojian, president and CEO of the DLBA.

Typically, the Redevelopment Agency has Project Area Commissions, composed of residents, to represent each project area in Long Beach. The DLBA serves in place of a Project Area Commission for the downtown area.

The DLBA was formed in 1937. Behind the scenes of redevelopment in Downtown Long Beach, the organization works with the city government to implement projects.

The DLBA is a nonprofit organization which is empowered by local property and business owners to manage the area, said Kojian. The association serves as a negotiator between local businesses and the city to voice concerns and set improvement projects in motion.

Downtown Long Beach has evolved so businesses and customers have confidence in the area, Kojian said. The association is trying to market Long Beach on a global scale so that it becomes an amenity and an attribute to the city.

King, DLBA member and owner of 555 East, a restaurant on Pine Avenue, has been a business owner in Long Beach since 1965 and a member in the DLBA since 1985. During his time as a local business owner in Downtown, King said he has observed the area become more appealing to upper-middle-class and frequented more often by educated individuals in Long Beach as well as surrounding areas.

King said everyone must cooperate in order to get any projects done.

"The city is far too often an impediment or adversary," King said. "But I'd rather speak about cooperative efforts."

The city's willingness to offer information concerning how to go about making certain improvement projects possible, such as more parking, has prevented possible conflicts King said.

"I really think that the city is dealing with experts," King said concerning the city's problem solving for the parking situation.

King said he feels the DLBA is a major force behind the improvement taking place in Downtown but that nothing would be possible without the cooperative efforts between the Long Beach City Chamber, DLBA and the Convention and Visitors Bureau. UM

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Critic's corner

Illustrations by Mitchell Byrd

CD Review: Foo Fighters • "One by One" A

From the thrashing guitars and roaring vocals of "All My Life," the first song from Foo Fighters' latest album, "One by One," it is obvious that Dave Grohl and the boys are back and rocking harder then ever.

The entire album is a revolutionary masterpiece of raucous rock. The album is much more rock-heavy than any other the band has released. However, "One by One" is not just a collection of one crazy rocker after the next; there are also some soft ones on there for the ladies. "Disenchanted Lullaby" and "Halo" are two amazingly crafty soft rockers, which show Grohl can shift from a roar to a harmony in a matter of minutes.

A change in the new album is the addition of former No Use For A Name guitarist, Chris Shiflett. The former punk guitarist adds an extra kick and provides a fuller sound for the Fighters. "One by One" is an amazingly complex album with many guitar loops and stop-go drumbeats, creating a unique listening experience.

— Joe Licavoli

Concert Review: Damien Rice at the Troubadour A+

For his first show in Los Angeles, this singer/songwriter from Ireland managed to pack the Troubadour with anxious fans. Sure, the Troubadour has sold-out shows all the time, but not often by musicians whose albums aren't even available to U.S. audiences.

At the show, which was presented by KCRW, Damien Rice managed to win over the audience quickly with his talent and charm. Assisting him with back up vocals was Lisa Hannigan. Their voices couldn't have been paired together more perfectly. The relatively short but sweet set consisted of songs off of his new album "O," and even a Radiohead cover.

The crowd—obviously in awe of Rice's stunning performance—didn't make a sound, except of course to laugh a little. Rice did a rather good job with the in-between-song anecdotes that musicians are quite fond of. Telling a joke or two helped to keep the audience alert and awake during his mellow set.

Overall the show seemed to be enjoyed a great deal by everyone in attendance, especially Rice. In fact, he enjoyed the show and Los Angeles so much he told the audience that he had decided to extend his stay. One thing is for sure—next time Rice returns, he will probably be performing at a much larger venue.

— Nicole Aromando

Movie Review: "Old School" B+

"Old School" is a funny movie. Period. Maybe it's because I'm a college student and it reminds me of every day in the dorms and how stupid I was, or maybe it's because I liked "Road Trip" and think Will Ferrell is hilarious, or maybe, just maybe, I haven't seen a movie that has really made me laugh. Whatever the reason, it was great to see the life of a college student being made fun of by comedians of this caliber. Vince Vaughn, Will Ferrell and even the straight-faced Luc Wilson work together very well. It's interesting that "guy-movies" seem to lean toward certain stereotypes just as typical "chick-flicks" have their own formulas. "Old School" has naked women, underage sex, guys complaining about their own relationships, and girlfriends with very little substance who just happen to be there. This could just as easily be an episode of the "Man Show." Oh well, girls have "How to Lose a Guy…," and we have this. Enjoy.

— Mitchell Byrd

Dear doc.

Q: UM has heard rumors galore about the benefits of herbal remedies such as Echinacea, ginseng and green tea. Do any of these remedies actually work? What are the benefits and risks involved?

A: Alan Manack, pharmacist, Student Health Services

Let's consider the following herbal remedies you may have heard about and areas of effectiveness, benefits and risks:

Echinacea

Echinacea has become extremely popular for the treatment of colds, flu, and other respiratory tract infections. Squeezed out of the roots of the purple coneflower and mixed with alcohol, it is commonly sold by the bottle as a tincture or dried up roots are sold as capsules. While studies vary on its effectiveness, it may be beneficial in reducing symptoms of upper respiratory tract infections. You may be concerned about taking Echinacea if you are using any drugs that have negative effects on your liver, such as body bulking anabolic steroids. A person may want to avoid Echinacea if they are immune-compromised, such as AIDS or cancer patients or those on immuno-suppressive drugs. Also, avoid Echinacea liquid mixed with an alcoholic base if you are on the antibiotic prescription metronidazole or Flagyl. The alcohol content is enough to make you experience an unpleasant reaction of nausea, vomiting, and flushing.

Ginseng

It is widely used for a variety of conditions, including improved physical and mental performance, enhanced immune function and cancer prevention. Reportedly, it protects the body from certain stressors. While this countering stress effect may be just what you need to fight off those little burdens of a calculus exam or last-minute term paper cramming, the jury seems to be out on this one. Mixed clinical findings for this agent give it no clear therapeutic recommendation at this time for its cognitive and performance enhancing claims. Diabetics and anyone on blood thinners or antiplatlets should take special precautions. Avoid ginseng for 7-10 days before and after any surgery. Reports of breast pain and breakthrough vaginal bleeding in women have been linked to ginseng.

Green Tea

The medicinal powers of herbal teas have been used for a very long time. Recently, the Western world has discovered that tea is more than a beverage served with crumpets. While black tea is mainly used as a drink, the non-fermented form of tea called green tea or the partially fermented form called oolong tea lay claim to increased longevity and good health. These teas promote health and prevent cancer. Uses include treatment for upset stomachs, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headaches and diuretic for weight loss. Strong antioxidant properties are linked to the use of teas as prevention of cancer and treatment for skin disorders like eczema. Claims for the prevention of bad breath and dental caries have also been reported.

Be aware that a large consumption of tea goes along with high-ingested doses of caffeine. Chronic use of caffeine can lead to symptoms of headache, sluggishness, rapid heart rates, jitteriness, insomnia, and generalized irritability. Avoid caffeine if you are pregnant or attempting to conceive, and limit its intake if you are being treated for clinical anxiety disorders.

Keep in mind

The information here is not intended to serve as a complete source of uses and side effects, and is not intended to promote their use in any way. Remember that anything introduced into your body with the purpose of making a change inside the body will also be strong enough to make other changes as well. Even if a product is labeled "natural," it still can cause side effects and act adversely in your body, when taken in doses high enough to promote health. Use these products cautiously.

Unlike prescription and OTC drug products, herbs are not tested for proof of safety and efficacy. Don't be tempted to buy the cheapest brand; a quality brand is really your best choice.

Always remember to mention these products to any health professional taking your medical history. Health care providers may not always remember to ask you if you are taking herbal supplements, but it is in your best interest to inform them as they might interact with some prescription medication.

By Julie Guevara

Julie Guevara/UM

Sean Orfila

Culinary art is often overlooked and under appreciated. It would not be referred to as art if it did not require skill, a strong sense of creativity and patience. Sean Orfila understands what goes into creating a masterpiece for people to enjoy. Orfila prepares many of the ingredients that chef's use to make sushi at WaSa Sushi, a restaurant in Irvine.

"I'm at the bottom of the sushi totem pole," Orfila says jokingly.

Though he is not a sushi chef just yet, he is well on his way. There is so much preparation that people do not usually see when making sushi. He makes rice and spicy tuna, cuts fish, and prepares the rolls, just to name a few of his duties.

"There's a lot of sincerity that goes into it as well," Orfila says.

He uses the example of a fish to describe the sincerity behind the art. He looks at a fish as if it has made a sacrifice, and therefore treats it with a certain candor that is shared by other sushi chefs and prep cooks as well.

A chef from Tokyo taught him this unique mindset. He also learned to appreciate grains of rice. He makes sure to utilize every grain of rice, because people put their whole lives into growing it. The idea of sincerity comes from learning to appreciate each element.

Orfila is also studying Japanese so that he can communicate with other sushi chefs in the future. He was only recently hired at WaSa Sushi, so it may not be too long before he can start to impress the chefs with their native tongue.

Whether it's a spicy tuna roll, rainbow roll, or the ever-so-famous California roll that you crave, check out WaSa Sushi where you will find Orfila working hard to make sure that his guests are satisfied with the "masterpiece" he has helped to create.

Every student has a story . . .

Andrea Di Lorenzo

Many are often blinded by the idea that this is the only country in which people can live happily and find opportunity. In a time when other nations are making an attempt to prove that we are not the great power that we assume ourselves to be, Andrea Di Lorenzo reminds people that there is so much more beyond our own realm of ideas and culture.

Di Lorenzo was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina. She refers to Argentina as a "melting pot of different cultures," but explains that unlike the United States, Argentines feel like they are one in the same and do not discriminate against one another as much. At 15, Di Lorenzo's mother sent her to the United States so that she could receive a better education.

"Since I was little, my mom would always say, 'You're going to live in the United States,'" says Di Lorenzo. "At that age, you don't know what's happening. You think that they're trying to get rid of you."

Being sent away made her the strong-minded and adventurous person that she is today. After a few semesters in college, Di Lorenzo decided to go backpacking through South America for two years. With nothing but a journal and a decent sum of money in her backpack, she made her way staying in hotels and in the homes of people she met while on her adventure.

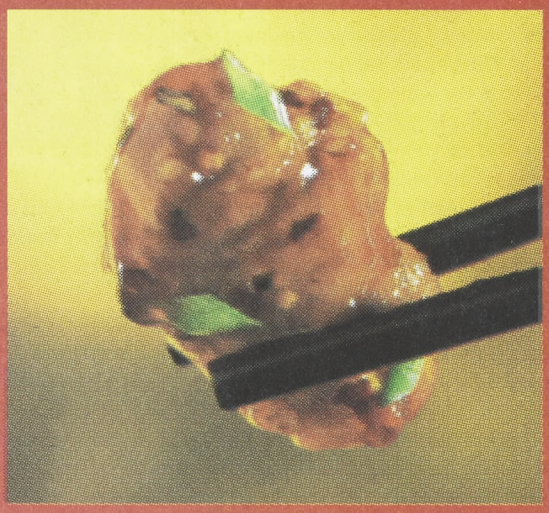
"You either stay and go to school or you can explore the world, and that's what I did—explore," she says. "I don't regret it."

Most homes did not have hot water and she often questioned the food she was given, but she was happy that people were willing to open their doors. A desire to delve into the world led her to talk to people from all walks of life, experience other cultures and break away from inner barriers.

She feels that when people open their minds, they stop viewing the "American way" as the paradigm for the world in which we live.

Julie Guevara/UM

Taste a little joy.



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WHEN: WEDNESDAY April 9 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM

WHERE: University Student Union Room 224:

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Student Health Services 562 985 4771